



Charter Schools Institute

The State University of New York

Renewal Recommendation Report

The Academy Charter School

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This report is the primary means by which the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a school’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a school’s case for renewal. The Institute has created and issued this report pursuant to the *Policies for the Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York* (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).¹

Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended) (the “Act”) are available on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	September 18, 2008
School Opening Date	September, 2009

Current Location

Address	District	Facility	Enrollment	Grades
117 N. Franklin St. Hempstead, NY 11550	Hempstead Union Free School District	Private	491	K-6

Partner Organization

School Year(s)	Partner Name	Partner Type
2009-10 to present	Victory Schools Inc.	Education Management Organization

¹ Revised September 4, 2013, and available at: <http://newyorkcharters.org/documents/SUNYRenewalPolicies.pdf>.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation **Initial Full-Term Renewal**

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of The Academy Charter School and renew its charter for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten through 8th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 832 students.

To earn an Initial Full-Term Renewal, a school must demonstrate that it has either (a) compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and has a generally effective educational program in place; or (b) made progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and has a particularly strong and effective educational program in place.²

Over the Accountability Period,³ the school has compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and has in place an educational program that is generally effective. The school has consistently met or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals in English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics, and has a generally effective educational program based on a review using the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks, Version 5.0 (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”).

Required Findings

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the school has met the SUNY Trustees’ specific renewal criteria, the Institute must make the following findings required by the Act:

- the school, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- the school can demonstrate the ability to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and
- given the programs it will offer, its structure and its purpose, approving the school to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.⁴

² SUNY Renewal Policies, page 10.

³ For the purpose of reporting student achievement results, the SUNY Renewal Policies define the Accountability Period as the time the Accountability Plan was in effect. In the case of an Initial Renewal, the Accountability Plan covers the first four years of the charter term under review.

⁴ See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the means by which it will meet or exceed SUNY’s enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners (“ELLs”), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program. SUNY⁵ and the Board of Regents finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012, and the Institute communicated specific targets for each school in July 2013. In accordance with the statute, the Institute, acting on behalf of the SUNY Trustees, considered the school’s plans for meeting its enrollment and retention targets prior to recommending the renewal application for approval.

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the school district in which the charter school is located regarding the school’s Application for Charter Renewal. As of the date of this report, the Institute has received no district comments in response.

Report Format

The Institute makes the foregoing renewal recommendation based on the school’s Application for Charter Renewal, evaluation visits conducted and information gathered during the charter term and a renewal evaluation visit conducted near the end of the current charter term. Most importantly, the Institute analyzes the school’s record of academic performance and the extent to which it has met its academic Accountability Plan goals. This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence below using the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, which specify in detail what a successful school should be able to demonstrate at the time of the renewal review. The Institute uses the following four interconnected renewal questions for framing benchmark statements to determine if a school has made an adequate case for renewal:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school an effective, viable organization?
3. Is the education corporation fiscally sound?
4. If the school’s charter is renewed, what are its plans for the next charter term, and are they reasonable, feasible and achievable?

The report’s Appendix provides a School Overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the school and additional evidence on student achievement contained in the School Performance Summaries.

⁵ SUNY Trustees’ Charter Schools Committee resolution dated October 2, 2012.

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

The Academy Charter School (“the Academy”) is an academic success based on its consistency in coming close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goals and evidence on its educational program compiled at the time of renewal.

Academic Attainment. At the beginning of the charter term, the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and math. The Accountability Plan also includes science and No Child Left Behind Act (“NCLB”) goals. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal.

Note: This year the Institute is not reporting results for the two absolute ELA and math measures. Because of the high standards in the new state testing program only a handful of schools statewide met the absolute proficiency target and the state has not yet recalibrated the absolute Annual Measurable Objective.

Throughout the Academy’s four-year Accountability Period and the three years for which state assessment results are available,⁶ the school has met its ELA goal and come close to meeting its math goal. The Academy met its targets in the two comparative measures in both ELA and math throughout the Accountability Period. The school met the growth measure in both subjects in 2011-12 and met it in math in 2012-13.

Specifically, the school far outperformed its local school district each year by at least about 25 percentage points in both subjects. It performed much better than predicted in both ELA and math compared to similar schools statewide based on economically disadvantaged students, far surpassing its targets each year in both subjects. With respect to comparative growth, students showed greater year-to-year growth compared to statewide results in both ELA and math than students with the same scores in the previous year in 2011-12. In 2012-13, the school again showed greater year-to-year growth compared to statewide results in math but not in ELA. In 2012-13, the school placed in the 52nd percentile math but in the 43rd percentile in ELA compared to other public schools statewide. This lower growth in ELA is partially attributable to the high ELA scores students achieved in the 2011-12 school year. During the Accountability Period, the school has also met its science goal and is in good standing under the state’s NCLB accountability system.

These results appear on the following page and in School Performance Summaries in the Appendix.

⁶While the Accountability Period covers the first four years of the charter term under review, the school only began administering state assessments to its 3rd graders when the school was in its second year of operation.

**The Academy
Charter School**

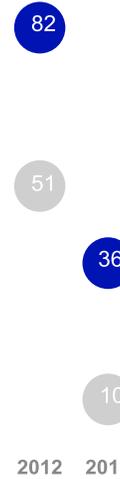
**Comparative Measure:
District Comparison.**
Each year, the percent of **students enrolled** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the **local school district**.

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL**



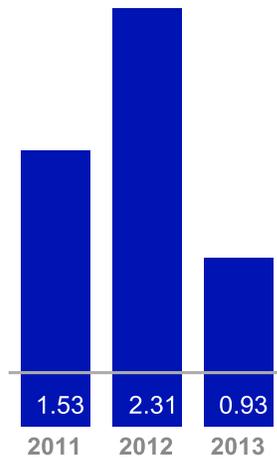
Standard consistently met.

**MATHEMATICS
ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN
GOAL**

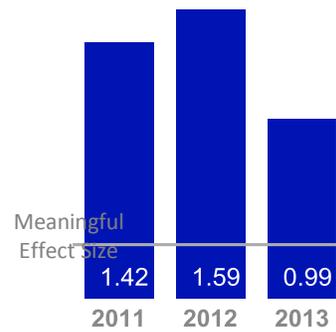


Standard consistently met.

**Comparative Measure:
Effect Size.**
Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

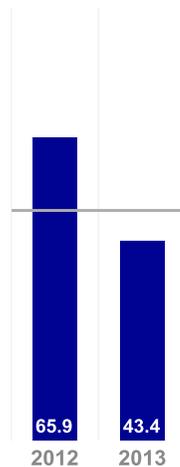


Standard consistently met.

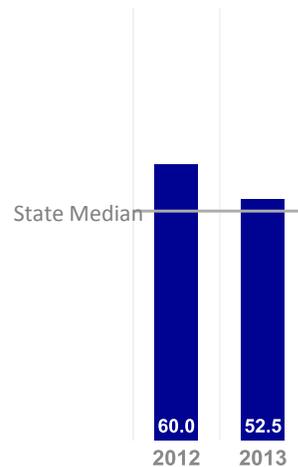


Standard consistently met.

**Comparative Growth Measure:
Mean Growth Percentile.**
Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.



Standard met in 2012.



Standard consistently met.

Instructional Leadership. The Academy has a stable leadership structure after having experienced multiple leadership transitions during the charter term. As has been the case throughout the term, the principal continues to hold operational and administrative duties. A staff developer provides curriculum development support for teachers and serves as the school's primary data coordinator. The principal and staff developer conduct frequent informal classroom observations. Late in the charter term, the school has adopted clear criteria by which it evaluates teachers and a review of previous evaluations provides some evidence of tailored feedback.

- The Academy's instructional leadership has instilled high expectations for teacher performance and student achievement. Teachers across the school consistently report they are expected to close gaps in student achievement, increase skill levels to meet the Common Core Learning Standards ("CCLS") and prepare students for middle school, high school and ultimately college. The school's high expectations extend to all students including students with disabilities, who must meet the same promotional criteria as those for mainstream students.
- In addition to the school principal, a staff developer and dean of students conduct frequent informal classroom observations; however, the school lacks a consistent process for providing teachers with written or verbal feedback from these observations. Four long-term consultants from the school's education management organization, Victory Schools Inc. (doing business as Victory Education Partners) ("Victory"), provide curriculum development and instructional support for classroom teachers and specialists. Instructional leaders coordinate with the consultants weekly to collaborate on schedules, review data from assessments and follow up on previous classroom observations.
- With weekly grade team meetings and daily common planning time, the Academy provides ongoing opportunities for teachers to plan curriculum and instruction. The math staff developer and ELA consultant attend grade team meetings on an alternating basis, and specialists join grade team meetings to plan instruction and provide strategies for supporting at-risk students in general education classrooms.
- School leaders work with the Victory team to plan pre-service training during August and twice monthly professional development activities during the school year. During the ten days of summer professional development activities, the school covers topics including curriculum development, identifying at-risk students, classroom management, the administration of standardized tests and building school culture. Topics addressed during professional development sessions on early release days include implementing the school's instructional framework, review of interim assessments and evaluating students' writing. Additionally, the Academy encourages teachers to take advantage of external learning opportunities.
- Teachers understand the criteria by which the school leader evaluates their performance and believe it to be fair. In the past, school leaders have implemented formal performance improvement plans for teachers not meeting expectations and have declined to renew contracts in cases where additional supports did not sufficiently improve teachers' pedagogical skills.

NOTEWORTHY

The Academy has a strong writing program across all grade levels and subject areas. Teachers display student writing in hallways and classrooms, with grade level rubrics, authentic comments and actionable suggestions on each piece. The school's emphases on literacy and high expectations for writing skills produce strong results.

Curriculum & Assessment. Throughout the charter term, the Academy has utilized commercial curricula to support teachers in their instructional planning. The school continues to administer regular and comprehensive assessments throughout the year in order to improve student learning and instructional effectiveness.

- Relying largely on the state's CCLS curriculum materials, commercial assessments and interim assessments provided by Victory, the school regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the school's curriculum and state performance standards. The school has reduced the number of commercial assessments and opted for assessments that align more closely with the school's curricula to endeavor to get a clearer gauge of student learning.
- In order to track student progress, the school makes data from interim assessments administered multiple times annually available to teachers, school leaders and the board of trustees through an online assessment monitoring system.
- Teachers use assessment results to determine which concepts to re-teach and to aid in the grouping of students. Teachers also use assessment results to identify and target academically struggling students for targeted interventions.
- The school has an underlying curriculum framework that provides a fixed structure aligned to state standards, with pacing guides and materials provided by Victory and supplemented with teacher-created curriculum maps in ELA and mathematics. The school revised its curriculum maps this year to ensure alignment with CCLS. Teachers also create unit plans over the course of the school year to provide a bridge between the curricula and weekly lesson plans. As a result, teachers know what to teach and when to teach it.
- With significant input from school leaders and consultants, grade-level teams develop purposeful, focused lessons.

Pedagogy. Clear, purposeful instruction is evident in most classrooms. As shown in the chart below, during the renewal visit, Institute team members conducted 23 classrooms observations following a defined protocol used in all school renewal visits.

		Grade							Total
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Content Area	ELA		3	1	1	2	1		8
	Math	1				1		3	5
	Science				1	1			2
	Soc Stu							1	1
	Writing			1	2	2	2		7
	Total	1	3	2	4	6	3	4	23

- Almost all teachers across the school deliver purposeful lessons that build on students’ previous skills and knowledge (22 out of 23 classrooms observed). Students know, understand and can speak articulately about learning objectives and lesson activities. Teachers present concepts with accuracy in clear and age-appropriate terms, often making references to real life situations in ways that engage students. In a writing lesson, the teacher shared a short narrative piece about a place she had visited, and then led students through the process of individual writing to share their experiences with their classmates. The teacher communicated clear expectations of the amount of detail students were to include in their paragraphs and embedded review of spelling, punctuation and grammar throughout the lesson, while still keeping students very engaged and eager to share their finished writing with the class. The school’s focus is clear; an emphasis on literacy is evident throughout all lessons and subjects, with an instructional framework that provides time for guided, shared and independent practice within each lesson.
- Teachers regularly use techniques to check for student understanding (20 out of 23 classrooms observed). During whole group instruction, teachers question students verbally to gauge knowledge and understanding of material. Teachers circulate to monitor written work during lessons. In several math lessons, teachers provided students with small white boards to display their answers to math problems; students shared their answers with teachers and other students quickly and easily. Co-teachers occasionally pull small groups to the side for ad-hoc re-teaching as needed, but few teachers adjusted whole group instruction based on the level of student understanding.
- Most teachers do not provide students with opportunities to develop higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills (10 out of 23 classrooms observed). Though teachers check for understanding, teachers do not challenge students to defend and elaborate on their answers. Peer interaction mostly occurs in brief conferences focused on confirming primary concepts rather than sustained discussions in which students grapple with the material. Teachers encourage students to use “accountable” and/or “collaborative” talk within pair shares or small group discussions to build on the answers of their peers, but often use timers to limit the length of time to one or two minutes. Some teachers repeatedly missed opportunities to challenge students’ answers or probe for richer responses by simply determining if the given answer was correct or not, or by supplying the correct one and moving on with instruction.
- Almost all teachers convey a sense of urgency for learning (21 out of 23 classrooms observed). Teachers across the school establish and maintain orderly, print-rich classroom environments with a consistent focus on academic achievement. Teachers make materials readily available, maintain fast-paced lessons and minimize transition time through well-practiced routines and procedures. Teachers and staff clearly communicate high expectations for behavior that they enforce without disruption to learning.

At-Risk Students. The Academy addresses the educational needs of at-risk students, although teachers do not clearly articulate intervention processes.

General Education Students Receiving Targeted Interventions

Program	Students receive both push-in and pull-out academic support for ELA and mathematics. The school offers after-school tutoring four afternoons a week throughout the school year and Saturday school sessions in the spring for students in need of additional remediation.
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Staff	The intervention staff consists of two Title 1 reading teachers, one academic intervention specialist (“AIS”) math teacher and one resource room teacher.
Identification Process	The school identifies students scoring below proficiency on a state exam, in the bottom 25 percent on a benchmark assessment and/or below 75 percent on an interim assessment as at-risk of academic failure. Teachers also identify struggling students using other assessment data and classroom observations.
Coordination	Classroom teachers and Title 1/AIS teachers meet weekly to plan lessons collaboratively and to discuss instructional approaches and student progress.
Progress Monitoring	Staff monitors students’ progress with the same school-wide criteria as the general population. There is no separate progress monitoring system to evaluate the effectiveness of specific interventions.
Classroom Teacher Professional Development	The special education coordinator and Victory personnel present professional development workshops on classroom strategies and monitoring student progress during pre-service training.

Students with Disabilities

Program	The school provides push-in and pull-out (resource room) services to students with Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”) in general education classrooms. It also offers counseling and coordinates services for speech, occupational and physical therapy with school districts as necessary. In addition, the school also has a 9:1:1 self-contained bridge class of 3 rd , 4 th and 5 th grade students with special needs.
Staff	The staff consists of the special education coordinator, resource room teacher, self-contained classroom teacher, teacher assistant, behavior specialist, and counselor.
Identification Process	The school collaborates with district Committees on Special Education on students who have already been identified as having special needs or disabilities. The school’s pupil personnel committee is also a mechanism for referring at-risk students for evaluations.
Coordination	The special education coordinator and resource room teacher attend biweekly meetings with classroom teachers to monitor students receiving services and to make suggestions for classroom supports.
Progress Monitoring	Classroom teachers closely monitor student performance on school wide assessments but are not fully aware of students’ IEP goals. The resource room teacher is primarily responsible for monitoring progress towards meeting IEP goals. There is no additional, systematic progress monitoring for students with disabilities.
Classroom Teacher Training	Special education staff members guide teachers through IEPs and offer suggestions on classroom strategies and supports to maximize students’ access to the curriculum. The special education coordinator and Victory personnel present professional development workshops on classroom interventions, monitoring student progress and using IEPs during pre-service training.

		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Enrollment (N)		(17)	(28)	(28)	
Results	Tested on State Exam (N)	(7)	(8)	(N/A)	
	Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	28.6	0	N/A	
	Percent Proficient in ELA Statewide	15.5	5	N/A	

English Language Learners

Program	ELL students receive push-in and pull-out support with the amount of intervention time determined by degree of English proficiency.				
Staff	One full time ELL teacher.				
Identification Process	The school uses the Home Language Survey and Language Assessment Battery-Revised (LAB-R) to identify students for ELL services.				
Progress Monitoring	The school monitors the performance of ELL students using the same school-wide criteria as the general population and gauges annual progress based on the NYSESLAT. ⁷				
Classroom Teacher Professional Development	None.				
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Enrollment (N)		(5)	(5)	(16)	
Results	Tested on NYSESLAT Exam (N)	(5)	(5)	N/A	
	Percent Proficient or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	60	40	N/A	

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

To the extent that the school has consistently come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals, the Academy is an effective and viable organization. The education corporation board (the “board”) carries out its oversight responsibilities faithfully and supports effective delivery of the educational program. During the current charter term, the board with certain minor exceptions has been in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, by-laws, applicable state and federal law, rules and regulations.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Board Oversight. The Academy’s board works effectively to achieve the school’s Accountability Plan goals and to ensure its future as an academically successful, financially healthy and legally compliant organization. Early in the charter term, the responsibilities of the board and principal overlapped somewhat but the board has worked to clarify its role in overseeing management of the day-to-day school operations. As demonstrated in its expansion to serve middle grades, the board establishes clear priorities, objectives and long-range goals. It holds school leaders, itself and its management company accountable for results.

- The board provides school leaders with sufficient resources to function effectively. For

⁷ New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, a standardized state exam.
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example, the board changed the school’s organizational structure and allocated more funds for senior leadership positions as the school added grades.

- The board appropriately manages personnel issues. After becoming aware of a former leader’s potentially inappropriate conduct toward some staff members, the board took immediate corrective action and removed the leader.
- The board competently oversaw changes to the service contract with its educational management organization.

Organizational Capacity. The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program. The executive director is the head of the school while the principal is the instructional leader.

- Under the executive director’s leadership, the Academy has established an adequate administrative structure that allows the school to carry out its academic program and priorities. The executive director manages the day-to-day operations of the school and appropriately delegates responsibility for instruction to the school principal.
- The organizational structure generally features distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Importantly, the school’s executive director handles key administrative and management duties freeing the principal to focus on teaching and learning; however, the board expects the principal to be involved in some non-instructional and administrative tasks, such as overseeing the lunch program and ordering text books.
- A well-established and consistently applied student discipline system is in place; it is clearly effective in the majority of classrooms across the school.
- The school has allocated sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals. Classrooms feature the latest technology with an abundance of curriculum resources.
- The school maintains adequate student enrollment and reports a current waitlist of approximately 316 students after the spring lottery.

FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER & PARENT SATISFACTION

Current Key Design Elements ⁸	Evident?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two hours of daily literacy instruction 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ninety minutes of daily mathematics instruction with an extensive use of manipulatives 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong family involvement 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character education, leadership development, and community awareness through service learning projects 	✓

⁸ As part of their initial application and their Application for Charter Renewal, schools identify the Key Design Elements that reflect their mission and distinguish the school.

Parent Satisfaction. Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.⁹

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS RESPONDING VERY SATISFIED AND SATISFIED ON THE ACADEMY'S ANNUAL PARENT SATISFACTION SURVEY				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall school culture and environment	96%	96%	Survey Not Conducted This Year	Survey Results Have Not Been Compiled
Standards and expectations for student learning and behavior	97%	99%		
Class size	92%	85%		
Support and concern for my child's individual growth	95%	96%		
My child's academic achievement/progress	94%	97%		
My child's behavioral conduct/progress	90%	96%		
School discipline policy and procedures	91%	98%		
Opportunities for parent/family involvement	87%	97%		
Communication between school and home	90%	93%		
School leadership	91%	94%		
Quality of your child's teacher(s) this year	96%	99%		
School safety	90%	93%		
School's curriculum and instructional rigor	90%	97%		
Variety of courses and activities offered	82%	87%		

Persistence in Enrollment. The school provided the following statistical information in their renewal application materials.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Percent of Eligible Students Returning From Previous Year ¹⁰	92	96	96

COMPLIANCE

Governance. In material respects, the board implements, maintains and abides by adequate and appropriate policies, systems and processes to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The board demonstrates a thorough understanding of its role in holding the school leadership accountable for both academic results and fiscal soundness.

- The board maintains a close relationship with Victory's fiscal staff, which has enabled it to engage in long range facilities planning including two successful bond offerings. The facilities financing enabled the board to stop paying rent for a less suitable facility and will enable the school to expand through 8th grade. The board understands that it must be able to both operate the school and make its bond payments.

⁹ Source: Application for Charter Renewal.

¹⁰ Source: Application for Charter Renewal.

- The board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws.
- The board holds an annual board retreat to focus on school leadership and governance issues.
- The board has informal systems in place to receive information from school leadership and Victory regarding student performance and financial performance of the education corporation.
- The board successfully implemented a revision to the charter to expand to 6th grade from 5th grade to position itself for a full middle school expansion post-renewal.

Legal Requirements. The education corporation generally and substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.

- IDEA. The school appeared to be in general compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act including the securing of IEPs and students receiving the settings and services in their IEPs.
- ELLs. At the time of the renewal visit, the school with certain exceptions appeared to be complying with federal civil rights laws and regulation with respect to its service of ELLs including dedicated and qualified staff and the use of commercial materials to provide English language instruction.

The Institute noted the following exceptions at the time of the renewal visit.

- FERPA. While the school distributes federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act information and forms to parents as part of enrollment, the Institute noted at the time of the renewal visit certain deficiencies related to the FERPA. Request forms, files logs and notices needed to be brought into compliance by school staff.
- FOIL. The Institute also noted some minor deficiencies in the school's compliance with the Freedom of Information Law including notice, regulations and lists of documents available.

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Strong fund balances and other evidence collected through the renewal review indicate the Academy is fiscally sound. The school maintains adequate cash reserves to ensure stable operations and operates solely on public funding. The board has established a finance subcommittee that works closely with the school’s executive director, principal and business manager. Victory provides fiscal operations support to the school.

Budgeting and Long-Range Planning. With support from Victory and the board finance committee, the Academy employs clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures.

- The business manager reviews financial reports prepared by Victory with the executive director and principal and the finance committee on a monthly basis.
- The school conducts regular reviews of the budget and makes adjustments if necessary. The business manager and board finance committee chair develop a revised budget proposal, which is then voted on by the full board.
- The Academy has developed a six-year financial model that reflects an operating surplus in each year.

Internal Controls. The Academy has a history of sound fiscal policies, procedures and practice and maintains appropriate internal controls. The school’s audit reports have been positive (unqualified opinion with no findings) in each of the four years reviewed.

Financial Reporting. The Academy has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing SUNY, the State Education Department (“SED”) and the Institute with required financial reports that were on time, complete and followed generally accepted accounting principles.

Financial Condition. The Academy maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. As of June 30, 2013, the school had net assets in excess of \$880K. The school has successfully managed its bond and other debt and has had no defaults.

The Fiscal Dashboard, provided in the Appendix, presents color coded tables and charts indicating that the Academy has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the course of its charter term.¹¹

¹¹ The U.S. Department of Education has established fiscal criteria for certain ratios or information with high – medium – low categories, represented in the table as green – gray – red. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of school.

ARE THE SCHOOL'S PLANS FOR THE NEXT CHARTER TERM REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE?

To the extent that the Academy has achieved its key academic goals, continues to implement an educational program that supports achieving those goals, operates an effective and viable organization, and is fiscally sound, its plans to continue to implement the educational program as proposed during the next charter period are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

Plans for the School's Structure. The school has provided all of the key structural elements for a charter renewal and those elements are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

MISSION FOR THE NEXT CHARTER TERM

The Academy Charter School ("The Academy") will offer an exceptional interdisciplinary curriculum in a technology rich environment that challenges students to explore connections across subjects and use experiential learning to bridge the gaps between theory and practice. In addition to core subjects, our students will benefit from high expectations in physical education, health, and the arts. Our focus on character development and community service will cultivate a student body poised to be active, engaged and responsible members of the community. We will employ a committed staff whose teaching and high academic and behavioral expectations will promote the excellence we know our community's children can achieve. Our students will graduate from The Academy with the content mastery and life skills needed to move into the top five percent of their middle and high school classes.

The school's Application for Charter Renewal contains all necessary elements as required by the Act. The proposed school calendar allots an appropriate amount of instructional time to meet or exceed instructional time requirements, and taken together with other academic and key design elements, should be sufficient to allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals. Other key aspects of the renewal application, to include the proposed by-laws and code of ethics, have been or will be amended to comply with various provisions of the New York Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, Public Officers Law and the General Municipal Law, as appropriate.

Plans for the Educational Program.

	Current Charter Term	End of Next Charter Term
Enrollment	491	832
Grade Span	K-6	K-8
Teaching Staff	51	64
Days of Instruction	180	180

The Academy has reached its full, currently chartered grade span of Kindergarten through 6th grade and plans to add two additional grades such that the school would provide instruction in Kindergarten through 8th grade in the next charter term. The same core elements of the

instructional program that have enabled the Academy to begin to meet its Accountability Plan goals during the current charter term would likely enable the school to meet its goals in the future.

Plans for Board Oversight and Governance. Board members express interest in continuing to serve the Academy in the next charter term, and may add one member.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the 5-year financial plan, the Academy presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term including budgets that are feasible and achievable. The Academy would continue to provide instruction in its current location for Kindergarten through 4th grade. The education corporation recently purchased with bond funds a building on the same block as the current facility, and the school would use it for 5th through 8th grades.

The organization's record of fiscal soundness, its successful bond borrowing and the financial projection reviewed demonstrate that the Academy has the ability to operate in a fiscally sound manner during the next charter term.

APPENDIX

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Current Mission Statement

The Academy Charter School (“The Academy”) will offer an exceptional interdisciplinary curriculum in a technology rich environment that challenges students to explore connections across subjects and use experiential learning to bridge the gaps between theory and practice. In addition to core subjects, our students will benefit from high expectations in physical education, health, and the arts. Our focus on character development and community service will cultivate a student body poised to be active, engaged and responsible members of the community. We will employ a committed staff whose teaching and high academic and behavioral expectations will promote the excellence we know our community’s children can achieve. Our students will graduate from The Academy with the content mastery and life skills needed to move into the top five percent of their middle and high school classes.

School Characteristics

School Year	Proposed Enrollment	Actual Enrollment¹²	Proposed Grades	Actual Grades
2009-10	175	169	K-2	K-2
2010-11	250	241	K-3	K-3
2011-12	325	338	K-4	K-4
2012-13	400	401	K-5	K-5
2013-14	475	491	K-5	K-6

¹² Source: SUNY Charter Schools Institute’s Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

Student Demographics

	2010-11 ¹³		2011-12		2012-13	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Hempstead UFSD Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Hempstead UFSD Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment ¹⁴	Percent of Hempstead UFSD Enrollment ¹⁵
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Black or African American	88	41	88	39	84	N/A
Hispanic	9	58	10	57	11	N/A
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1	0	1	0	3	N/A
White	0	0	0	3	0	N/A
Multiracial	2	0	1	0	2	N/A
Students with Disabilities						
Students with Disabilities	11	--	18	--	26	N/A
English Language Learners						
English Language Learners	4	26	5	27	6	N/A
Eligible for Free Lunch						
Eligible for Free Lunch	65	59	74	79	72	N/A
Eligible for Reduced – Price Lunch						
Eligible for Reduced – Price Lunch	24	6	15	5	16	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged						
Economically Disadvantaged	--	--	--	--	--	N/A

Current Board of Trustees¹⁶

Board Member Name	Position
Barrington Goldson	Chair
Robert Stewart	Deputy Board Chair
Hazeltin Williams	Secretary
Janet-Ann Sanderson	Trustee
Hope Chin	Trustee
Peter Goodman	Trustee
Shelia Dancy-Wilkins	Trustee
Roderick Roberts	Trustee
Dawn West-Bloise	Trustee
Jacqueline Small-St. Armand	PTO President

¹³ Source: 2010-11 and 2011-12 School Report Cards, SED.

¹⁴ The 2012-13 Students with Disabilities statistic, ELL and Economically Disadvantaged statistics are derived from the school's October 2012 student enrollment report to SED (2012-13 BEDS Report).

¹⁵ District-level Students with Disabilities enrollment data are not available for 2010-11. SED released these district data for the first time in spring 2012. Please note that SED releases data up to a full year after the conclusion of any one school year. As such, the data presented in this table may differ from current information reported by the school and included in this report.

¹⁶ Source: Institute Board Records.

School Leader(s)

School Year(s)	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2009-10	Nykeisha Jenkins-Rycraw, Principal
2010-11 to 2011-12	Nicholas Stapleton, Principal
2012-13 to Present	Clarence Williams, Jr., Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2009-10	First-Year Visit	Institute	April 5, 2010
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	Institute	April 27-28, 2011
2013-14	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	September 30-October 1, 2013

Conduct of the School Renewal Visit

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
September 30 - October 1, 2013	Natasha Howard, PhD	Director of School Evaluation
	Heather Wendling	Senior Analyst
	Adam Aberman	Consultant

FISCAL DASHBOARD



Academy, The

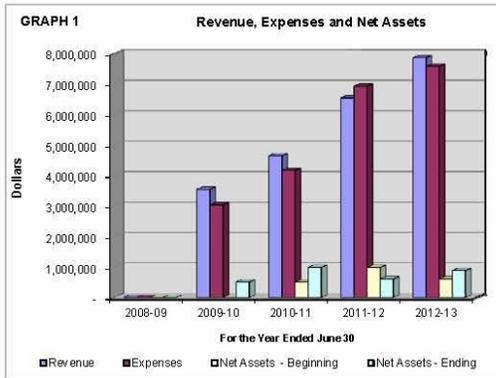
SCHOOL INFORMATION

FINANCIAL POSITION	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Assets						
Current Assets						
Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 2	-	-	180,747	2,448,226	1,409,760	2,324,669
Grants and Contracts Receivable	-	-	286,293	127,507	74,799	-
Accounts Receivable	-	-	20,289	502,988	449,805	112,008
Prepaid Expenses	-	-	13,392	51,806	5,004	7,172
Contributions and Other Receivables	-	-	-	3,515	-	-
Total Current Assets - GRAPH 2	-	-	500,721	3,134,042	1,939,368	2,443,849
Property, Building and Equipment, net	-	-	282,299	8,278,497	9,300,866	9,206,498
Other Assets	-	-	20,000	836,550	775,560	735,494
Total Assets - GRAPH 2	-	-	803,020	12,249,089	12,015,794	12,385,841
Liabilities and Net Assets						
Current Liabilities						
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	-	-	68,090	108,576	138,828	270,343
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	-	-	220,363	193,565	285,526	435,703
Deferred Revenue	-	-	10,024	-	-	-
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	246,266	173,323
Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 2	-	-	298,477	302,141	670,620	879,369
L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities	-	-	-	10,740,000	10,740,000	10,625,000
Total Liabilities - GRAPH 2	-	-	298,477	11,042,141	11,410,620	11,504,369
Net Assets						
Unrestricted	-	-	504,543	989,512	605,174	881,472
Temporarily restricted	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Net Assets	-	-	504,543	989,512	605,174	881,472
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	-	-	803,020	12,031,653	12,015,794	12,385,841
ACTIVITIES						
Operating Revenue						
Resident Student Enrollment	-	-	2,804,951	4,489,415	6,164,366	7,410,067
Students with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	36,746	49,526
Grants and Contracts						
State and local	-	-	670,262	76,536	108,756	-
Federal - Title and IDEA	-	-	67,280	78,026	-	163,317
Federal - Other	-	-	-	-	235,507	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	2,705
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	-	2,541	6,298	6,241	242,699
Total Operating Revenue	-	-	3,545,034	4,650,275	6,551,616	7,868,314
Expenses						
Regular Education	-	-	2,702,164	3,383,277	5,554,688	5,992,774
SPED	-	-	-	-	-	328,437
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	317,676
Total Program Services	-	-	2,702,164	3,383,277	5,554,688	6,638,887
Management and General	-	-	340,768	785,804	1,383,604	954,078
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses - GRAPH 1 / GRAPH 4	-	-	3,042,932	4,169,081	6,938,292	7,592,965
Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations	-	-	502,102	481,194	(386,676)	275,349
Support and Other Revenue						
Contributions	-	-	1,265	-	130	-
Fundraising	-	-	-	840	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	1,176	2,932	2,211	949
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support and Other Revenue	-	-	2,441	3,772	2,341	949
Total Unrestricted Revenue	-	-	3,547,475	4,654,047	6,445,201	7,713,091
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	-	-	-	-	108,756	156,172
Total Revenue - GRAPH 1	-	-	3,547,475	4,654,047	6,553,957	7,869,263
Change in Net Assets	-	-	504,543	484,966	(384,335)	276,298
Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 1	-	-	-	504,543	989,509	605,174
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 1	-	-	504,543	989,509	605,174	881,472
Functional Expense Breakdown						
Personnel Service						
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	451,270	598,790	714,391	840,967
Instructional Personnel	-	-	859,713	1,394,392	1,850,819	2,247,508
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	138,702	145,961	350,993	518,632
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	-	-	1,449,685	2,129,143	2,916,203	3,607,007
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	-	318,359	446,338	609,392	736,589
Retirement	-	-	-	24,747	38,966	80,254
Management Company Fees	-	-	330,768	524,367	716,080	625,000
Building and Land Rent / Lease	-	-	152,142	217,864	1,055,286	920,875
Staff Development	-	-	49,695	91,124	53,731	50,787
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	-	53,774	33,550	57,107	74,870
Marketing / Recruitment	-	-	49,589	10,373	13,780	342
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	-	372,429	205,079	367,990	176,785
Depreciation	-	-	59,933	93,605	454,204	466,949
Other	-	-	206,558	392,891	655,553	853,507
Total Expenses	-	-	3,042,932	4,169,081	6,938,292	7,592,965
ENROLLMENT						
Chartered Enroll	-	-	168	240	289	336
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	-	-	168	240	342	414
Chartered Grades	-	-	K-2	K-3	K-4	K-5
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-	-

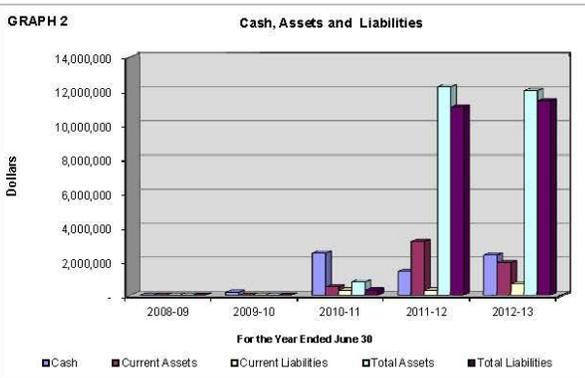
Academy, The

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	
Primary School District							
Hempstead							
Per Pupil Funding	16,165	17,356	17,356	19,202	19,202	19,202	
Increase over prior year	2.8%	7.4%	0.0%	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%	
PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN							
Revenue							
Operating	-	-	21,101	19,376	19,129	19,006	19,869
Other Revenue and Support	-	-	15	16	7	2	12
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-	-	21,116	19,392	19,136	19,008	19,881
Expenses							
Program Services	-	-	16,084	14,097	16,218	16,036	15,467
Management and General, Fundraising	-	-	2,028	3,274	4,040	2,305	3,114
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-	-	18,113	17,371	20,258	18,341	18,581
% of Program Services	0.0%	0.0%	88.8%	81.2%	80.1%	87.4%	83.3%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	0.0%	11.2%	18.8%	19.9%	12.6%	16.7%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	0.0%	0.0%	16.6%	11.6%	-5.5%	3.6%	7.0%
Student to Faculty Ratio				13.3	11.8	14.3	
Faculty to Admin Ratio				3.6	3.6	3.6	
Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6							
Score	-	-	-	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7
Risk (Low > 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring -1.0 - 0.9)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong
Working Capital - GRAPH 7							
Net Working Capital	-	-	202,244	2,831,901	1,268,748	1,564,480	1,434,298
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	60.8%	19.7%	20.3%	28.7%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	-	-	1.7	10.4	2.8	2.8	5.0
Risk (Low > 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	MEDIUM	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	Good	Excellent	Good	Good	Excellent
Quick (Acid Test) Ratio							
Score	-	-	1.6	10.2	2.9	2.8	4.9
Risk (Low > 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7							
Score	-	-	0.4	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Excellent	Good	Poor	Good	Good
Months of Cash - GRAPH 8							
Score	-	-	0.7	7.0	2.4	3.7	3.4
Risk (Low > 6 mo. / Medium 3 - 6 mo. / High < 3 mo.)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 6 mo. / Good 3 - 6 mo. / Poor < 3)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Excellent	Poor	Good	Good



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year to year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.



This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right, and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts
Academy Charter School



	2010-11 Grades Served: K-3			MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-4			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-5			MET			
	Grades	All Students	2+ Years Students		Grades	All Students	2+ Years Students		Grades	All Students	2+ Years Students				
		% (N)	% (N)			% (N)	% (N)			% (N)					
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	71.1 (45)	(0)		3	72.0 (50)	73.7 (38)		3	36.8 (76)	34.8 (66)				
	4	(0)	(0)		4	85.1 (47)	88.8 (38)		4	31.3 (48)	29.7 (37)				
	5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)		5	28.9 (45)	26.3 (38)				
	6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)				
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)				
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)				
	All	71.1 (45)	(0)		All	78.4 (97)	80.3 (76)	YES	All	33.1 (169)	31.2 (141)	NO			
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PLI	AMO				
	3	169	122		3-4	172	135		3-5	108					
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Hempstead UFSD			NA	Comparison: Hempstead UFSD			YES	Comparison: Hempstead UFSD			YES			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	3				3-4	80.3	35.9		3-5	31.2	8.8				
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES
	64.5	71.1	46.7	1.53		73.8	78.4	44.2	2.31		81.5	33.1	20.7	0.93	
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State	YES	Grades	School	State	NO			
	4				4				4	48.5					
	5				5				5	37.7					
	6				6				6	0.0					
	7				7				7	0.0					
	8				8				8	0.0					
	All		50.0		All	65.9	50.0		All	43.4	50.0				

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Academy Charter School



	2010-11 Grades Served: K-3			MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-4			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-5			MET			
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)				
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	77.8 (45)	(0)		3	82.0 (50)	78.9 (38)		3	38.2 (76)	31.8 (66)				
	4	(0)	(0)		4	85.1 (47)	84.2 (38)		4	45.8 (48)	43.2 (37)				
	5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)		5	40.0 (45)	36.8 (38)				
	6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)				
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)				
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)				
	All	77.8 (45)	(0)		All	83.5 (97)	81.6 (76)	YES	All	40.8 (169)	36.2 (141)	NO			
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PLI	AMO				
	3	178	137		3-4	182	148		3-5	126					
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Hempstead UFSD			NA	Comparison: Hempstead UFSD			YES	Comparison: Hempstead UFSD			YES			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	3			3-4	81.6	46.5	3-5	36.2	9.8						
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES
	64.5	77.8	51.4	1.42		73.8	83.5	53.8	1.59		81.5	40.8	24.0	0.99	
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State	YES	Grades	School	State	YES			
	4				4				4	51.0					
	5				5				5	54.2					
	6				6				6	0.0					
	7				7				7	0.0					
	8				8				8	0.0					
	All		50.0		All	60.0	50.0		All	52.5	50.0				